

WEST VIRGINIA -ELECTION CONNECTION-

Your source for Election News from Secretary of State Natalie E. Tennant

Issue 10 – December 13, 2011

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21 Weeks Until the May Primary!

On Tuesday, December 13 there will be exactly 21 weeks until the May Primary! The Secretary of State's Office has distributed our calendars for the 2012 election. It has dozens of deadlines, requirements, and procedures listed. If you need more calendars, please feel free to contact us and we will get them to you as soon as possible.

Association of Counties DVD Available

Patti Hamilton of the West Virginia Association of Counties would like to let everyone know that the DVD "Living Monuments – West Virginia's Courthouses" is now available. It premiered on West Virginia Public Television in June and is a professional production by The Walkabout Company in Wheeling. WVACo won the 2011 "Spirit of West Virginia" Award in September for the movie from the Division of Tourism. The DVDs are available for \$10 from the WVACo. The DVD features 15 courthouses, but several others are shown and Patti says the DVD really highlights the history and importance of all of the courthouses in the state. There is a brief segment on election activity near the end of the DVD. The WVACo also has 2012 calendars featuring all 55 county courthouses available for \$6. You can contact the WVACo at wvaco@wvaco.org or (304) 346-0591 to order your DVD or calendar.

Secretary of State Website Wins Third Place In Pew Center Study

The West Virginia Secretary of State's website has ranked third nationally in a Pew Center on the States study that evaluated how content about elections is presented online to voters.

West Virginia scored 45.4 out of a possible high score of 50. The Pew Center evaluated the elections websites of all 50 states and the District of Columbia.

West Virginia received high marks for posting information about how to register to vote, a detailed state candidate list, information for military and overseas voters, information about absentee voting, results for current and past elections with detailed maps, and active voter outreach through social media channels such as Facebook and Twitter.

The Pew Center made special note of a “comprehensive and easy-to-read alphabetical list of municipal elections.” That list includes the dates of each municipality’s primary and general election and the voting system used in each municipality.

Efforts are being made to make the website even better. In the future, voters will be able to see sample ballots online and find more detailed information about the location of their polling place. One improvement that has already been made is the ability of an absentee voter to check the status of their ballot and make sure it was received and counted.

Overall, the West Virginia Secretary of State’s election website ranked 22nd out of 50 states and the District of Columbia.

Secretary of State’s Office Holiday Hours

Please make a note of the Secretary of State’s Office holiday hours. The office will be **OPEN** on Friday, December 23. Because Christmas Day falls on a Sunday, the office will be **CLOSED** on Monday, December 26. The office will be **OPEN** on Friday, December 30. However, the office will be **CLOSED** on Monday, January 2, 2012.

Find the Secretary of State’s Office on Facebook and Twitter

If you have a Facebook account (about 800 million people in the world do!) or a Twitter account (about 200 million people do!) you can follow the West Virginia Secretary of State’s Office. This is one of the best ways to stay updated with what is going on at the State Capitol. You can see pictures and videos, and you may also find out something that wasn’t issued as a press release or included in the Election Connection. **And as a hint:** Press releases are first published through Facebook and Twitter. So if you want to know the “news” even before reporters find out, “Like” us on Facebook and “Follow” us on Twitter. Just go to www.facebook.com and search for “Office of West Virginia Secretary of State Natalie E. Tennant” and go to www.twitter.com and search for “Natalie E. Tennant.”

Have an idea?

Is there something that you want to see addressed in the Election Connection? The goal of this newsletter is to keep everyone up to date about challenges facing election officials in West Virginia and to inform everyone about best practices that are being put into place. If you have an idea for a topic, have a question, or if you think there is a subject that election officials around the state would be interested in, please do not hesitate to contact the Secretary of State’s Office. You can contact the Elections

Division by email at elections@wvsos.com or (304) 558-6000 or Jake Glance directly at jglance@wvsos.com. Your input is appreciated.